

How else are we different?

Children's Rights Respecting School – 42 children's rights are the foundation to everything we do. - **Article 29 – “To be the best that you can be.” This applies to everyone!**

This inspired a visit by Helen Grant the Equalities Minister in May 2013 to see the work we do on raising aspiration and achieving success. This right and the entire 42 rights cascade through our whole curriculum – links are made to all curriculum areas including the new National Curriculum work being undertaken. All school events and assemblies are “rights respecting”. Parents are aware of their child's rights and responsibilities through parental events. This is particularly powerful when many of our families have travelled thousands of miles to this country to fight for their own basic human rights and a better life for their children.

**“St. Mary's does an outstanding job at recognising skills in the community and providing the opportunities for them to be recognised and developed. Many have struggled in this community to fulfill their potential but St. Mary's is the voice which tells them they are valued. St. Mary's does not seek to judge or to condescend but instead work in partnership with the community to help us all to be the best we can be.”** Year 4 Community and Enterprise Lead

Pupil Voice

Each class has a class rights charter- with rights chosen by the children from the Children's Rights Charter. We have a playtime charter which is also created by all pupils, children talk in terms of responsibilities and rights – learning behaviours are exemplary and learning and behaviour outstanding. Pupil surveys are conducted regularly and issues raised and dealt with.

The **UNICEF Action Team** is made up of pupils from Year 1 to Year 6, voted by their classmates. They plan and deliver presentations to other schools and talk to senior leaders. They plan to talk to senior leaders at high schools in the summer term to ensure their work on rights and responsibilities continues when they go to high school.

St. Mary's won the “Youth Charter Award” for its Rights Respecting Work and was presented with a scroll in The House of Commons. The children spoke in front of an audience of 200 people from all over the world after being introduced by the speaker John Bercow! - **Peer mentors** have reduced lunchtime incidents by almost 100% - any serious incidents use reflection sheets to reflect on behaviour which doesn't respect other children's rights. The children are being supported to supervise this work soon.

**“Take Over Day”** – children applied for jobs and took over school for the day! A Head, Deputy, Assistant Head, teachers, teaching assistants, governors, catering, caretaking. Children applied and were interviewed by the Action Team. Lots of work was developed around responsibilities in different roles before choices were made! -**Day for Change** – Focuses on a global issue each year. We have focused on “the right to go to school and learn” The founder of Concerns Universe Foundation visited us and the Action Team to develop children's rights in India using our work and in particular our website as a platform to develop pupil voice in the schools she has founded.

**“The UNICEF Rights are so important. Many children across the world do not have rights. I am Libyan and not all Libyan children have rights. When I grow up I want to be a rights respecting lawyer to make sure all children have the 42 rights”** Rabha Year 5 pupil

We are so proud that our children talk more about their responsibilities the more they understand their rights!

**“Every child has a voice in this school, and the confidence to use it, being aware of their UNICEF rights and their corresponding responsibilities, helping them become responsible citizens in an exciting future for Moss Side.”** Year 3 teacher

## Parents ... it takes a village to raise a child

Parents' rights and responsibilities have developed in tandem with this. International Women's Day for the past 3 years has centred on rights and responsibilities. Parents have works shops reflecting on their responsibility to help their children learn. This is ensuring that we are all working to push attainment and achievement up. Partnerships have been made with schools with very different cultural backgrounds. The Action Teams from 3 schools have spent time together breaking down prejudice. Black history month is celebrated across all three schools- website promotes. Mosaic – quotes form TES – employability – qualifications – digital access for Mums ESOL classes. Our rights respecting work is beginning to be picked up by schools in our developing partnership in Moss Side.

Pastoral Work – PIP team work at school and in the home – have supported several families with severe and life threatening domestic violence who are now safe and attending at 100% and attaining above national average in most cases. Staff go the extra mile on a daily basis. Finding safe places, supporting children and families, fighting legal battles, being advocates for children, preventing exclusions, ensuring needs are met, that children get fed and are in school on time every day, food parcels, voucher centre for food banks, finding clothing, delivering hampers in the snow late at night. Many of our most challenged families owe everything the work of our Pastoral Team.

Parents quotes: Incredible Parents Group Members:

Sarah – Being a parent at St. Marys has empowered me in ways I never thought possible and this is down to the dedication, support, quality and standards that are offered to every child and family. -

Jolanta – Through supporting me through a difficult time the pastoral team helped me change my life. I couldn't have done this without them. I owe this school everything. Now I know that I am alive.

Malika – This schools leads by example, making sure children are safe and are able to express themselves without prejudice or bias. I don't know another school like this.

## And partners.

The safety of the environment in Moss Side & Hulme is an area of concern for the community and St Mary's have worked with the children, the community and other agencies such as Moss Care and other social landlords to raise awareness. The school has also done excellent work recently on raising awareness of hate crime, a truly important issue in an area as diverse as Moss Side. The school goes above and beyond its role and is a main stakeholder in this area. The work they do is inspirational and of real benefit to the children and local residents. Jacky Ellison- Neighbourhood Lead- Moss Care Housing

As a free -lance play therapist I have worked at St. Mary's for a number of years. I have found the school to be one of the most nurturing, informed and professionally supportive schools within the Greater Manchester area. My experience has been that the staff support and understand the unique needs of the pupils in their care. This holistic approach means that teachers are consistently interested in the emotional development of the children who come into the weekly sessions and respect the framework of the therapeutic model and are therefore extremely accommodating of the process. Lorraine Finnegan, Play Therapist

But finally ..... The children

“ It is important to speak up for your rights and other people's rights. Responsibility is important too. You have the right to be the best that you can be but have a responsibility to come to school every day and work hard. Everyone at St. Mary's expects us work hard and do our best” Demi Year 5

